# Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2002-2003

**December 2003**

Nova Scotia Advisory Council
on the Status of Women
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Note: several pages in this document are blank in order to facilitate two-sided printing

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## Accountability Statement

The accountability report of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women for the year ended March 31, 2003, is prepared pursuant to the *Provincial Financial Act,* the *Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act*, 1977, c. 3, s. 6(1) and government policy and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women's business plan information for the fiscal year 2002-2003. The reporting of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women's outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women management.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women's management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women's business plan for the year.

Minister

Chair

Executive Director

## Messages from the Minister and Chair

### Message from the Minister

I wish to congratulate the Advisory Council on the Status of Women. The year 2002-03 marked the Council's 25th anniversary and I would like to thank all the women who have served as Council members during that time. As I begin my journey in provincial politics, I value the work that the Advisory Council has undertaken to increase women's participation in the political life of this province.

I am pleased to bring forward this accountability report which describes the many valuable activities that the Advisory Council was involved in last year: addressing the need to get more women involved in trades; prevention of violence against women; participation of women in politics; and the health and well-being of women and their families. I look forward to working with a Council that is committed to advancing equality, fairness, and dignity for all women. Together we will strive to improve the lives of women in the coming years - the journey continues.

### Message from the Chair

I am honoured to have been elected as Chair of the Advisory Council on the Status of Women for 2003-05. I have served on the Advisory Council for several years and know how vitally important it is to continue working for equality for all women in Nova Scotia.

This report describes the hard work and many accomplishments of the Advisory Council during its 25th Anniversary year. The year was an exciting one for Council. We took part in a wonderful forum which gave us the opportunity to reflect on 25 years of women's history in this province and to set a course for our future. On International Women's Day, we celebrated the many positive changes the last 25 years have brought for women. Much has happened and some young women today feel that all the battles have been fought and won. But while we are able to rejoice in these advances, we also know that much work remains to be done for equality to be achieved for all women.

On behalf of the Council, I would like to thank past and present Ministers for their support and would also like to acknowledge the dedication and skill of Council staff.

I look forward to continuing my term as Chair of the Advisory Council and to keep meeting with women in my community and around the province. I appreciate the support and the willingness of women to share their concerns with me and with Council. We will continue to work together to find solutions to the challenges we face. The Advisory Council has an exciting plan of action for the coming year. Thanks to all who have made and will continue to make this such a rewarding experience.

## Highlights of 2002-03

In addition to observing its 25th anniversary year and marking the occasion with a number of successful celebrations and events, the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women continued to focus on its legislated mandate of advising government and bringing forward the concerns of women, within its framework of four strategic goals:

- working toward the inclusion of all women;
- promoting women's economic equality;
- reducing violence against women; and
- working toward improved health and well-being for women and their families.

In September, the Advisory Council's 25th Anniversary forum (The Journey Continues) brought together more than 60 women, including some of the leaders and pioneers of Nova Scotia's women's movement, to recognize achievement and to identify future directions for women in the province. Anniversary celebrations culminated with a sold-out International Women's Day concert held at Pier 21. We were honoured by the attendance of Her Excellency, Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada and Right Honourable Madam Chief Justice Beverly McLachlin of Canada's Supreme Court.

The agency produced a number of high-quality publications again this year to communicate to government and the public a perspective which takes into account and is supportive of women. These included a brief on Women and Health Care (in response to the Royal Commission on Health Care Reform), a brief on voyeurism (federal Department of Justice consultation), a statistical report on women's education and training, a backgrounder on women's issues, and a report on the 25th Anniversary forum.

In its efforts to increase the political representation of women in the province, the Advisory Council delivered a series of workshops on women and politics in four regions of Nova Scotia. The workshops were well-attended and very favourably evaluated by participants, with positive media coverage, province-wide.

The Advisory Council continued building and strengthening community partnerships. With the Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health as co-lead, the Advisory Council rolled out its CIHR-funded *Healthy Balance* research program examining the links between women's health, paid work, and caregiving. Both quantitative and qualitative research are well underway and initial results are being disseminated through presentations and publications.

The Advisory Council, in its continuing work with the Nova Scotia Round Table on Women's Economic Security (which the Council established in 2002), decided to commission a background paper on transition to employment programs for low-income women. The Advisory Council's continued involvement in the Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI) has ensured that gender and social inclusion are fully integrated into the work of the SCI..

Council publication and website usage hit an all-time high this year, with over 68,000 website visits and more than 25,000 publications either downloaded or requested.

## Introduction

The contents of this accountability report are based on the goals, priorities and outcomes described in the Advisory Council's business plan for 2002-2003. The report describes the accomplishments and progress that the Advisory Council has made in meeting those goals and priorities.

This report is organized around the Advisory Council's strategic goals which are described below. Accomplishments and progress for each of the agency's four strategic goals appear in the next section of this report, followed by financial information and outcome measures.

**Background**

In April 1975, the Government of Nova Scotia appointed a seven-member Task Force on the Status of Women and instructed them to study the Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (1970) with particular reference to those recommendations within provincial jurisdiction; report to the government on the status of women in the province; and recommend to government actions necessary to improve the status of women in Nova Scotia. This report is summed up in the publication entitled *Herself/Elle-Même* (1976).

The Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women was established in 1977 to advise the provincial government on issues of interest and concern to women, and to bring those issues forward.

The mandate of the Advisory Council on the Status of Women is defined by the *Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act*, which was first passed in 1977. The mandate and powers of the Advisory Council on the Status of Women are set out in Section 4 of the Act:

- to advise the Minister upon such matters relating to the status of women as are referred to the Council for consideration by the Minister;

- to bring to the attention of the Minister matters of interest and concern to women.

The Council's powers are:

- to receive and hear petitions and suggestions concerning the status of women;
- to undertake and recommend research on matters relevant to the status of women;
- to recommend and participate in programs concerning the status of women;
- to propose legislation, policies and practices to promote equality of opportunity and status;
- to publish reports, studies and recommendations.

Since 1977, the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women has kept women's issues on the agenda of governments. The Minister responsible for the Status of Women appoints 10 to 12 women to the Advisory Council from all regions of the province. Council members stay in touch with women in their communities, identifying opportunities and needs for government action. Diversity is a hallmark of Council membership and action, as the Council seeks to be inclusive of all women in Nova Scotia. Council staff work on policy research, public education, and community awareness building.

## MISSION, GOALS AND CORE FUNCTIONS

### OUR MISSION

To advance equality, fairness and dignity for all women in Nova Scotia.

### OUR GOALS

- To increase the participation of women in all their diversity in decisions that affect their lives, families and communities, with particular emphasis on those who face discrimination because of race, age, language, class, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or various forms of family status.

- To promote women's economic equality.

- To reduce violence against women in communities, workplaces and families.

- To improve the health and well-being of women and their families.

### OUR CORE FUNCTIONS

**Policy & Research**
The Council advises the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women on the concerns and priorities of women, and formulates strategies and options to address these. The Council conducts quantitative and qualitative research in consultation with community groups and government departments to ensure advice is a feasible, relevant, timely and accurate guide to government action.

**Information and Education**
The Council collects and disseminates information on women's issues to the Minister, Council, staff, and other key stakeholders, including the media and the general public. Through a comprehensive communications strategy, Council informs and influences key stakeholders about issues and concerns affecting women, Council, and government priorities, activities and accomplishments, as well as about opportunities for improvement in addressing women's issues.

**Community Liaison & Rural Outreach**

Through Council members and fieldwork staff, the Advisory Council brings forward concerns of women from across Nova Scotia, with particular attention to historically disadvantaged groups. Council also partners with communities, organizations, and agencies to advance equality for women in programs and services.

## Progress and Accomplishments
## 2002-03

### Core Function: Policy & Research

**Priority: Maintaining Effectiveness of the Advisory Council**

Four new members joined the Advisory Council in 2002-03: Mary Hamblin, Nancy Leaman, Candy Palmater, and Liz Chisholm. New Council members were given an extensive orientation to the work and mandate of the Council as well as a presentation on women's issues in Nova Scotia and media relations training. All four new members evaluated their orientation positively.

The Advisory Council met formally on five occasions during the 2002-03 fiscal year. The outcome of these meetings resulted in direction for issues such as poverty affecting women and children; changes to the *Criminal Code* in relation to voyeurism; women and healthcare (as input to the Royal Commission on Health Care Reform); costs for long-term care of seniors in Nova Scotia; the rights of victims of violent crime; and the rights of women in common-law relationships.

Rita Warner of Judique, Cape Breton served as Chair of the Advisory Council until March 31, 2003. During the 2002-03 fiscal year, Ms. Warner led the activities of Council and brought forth the many concerns of women in rural communities including issues related to housing, disabilities, caregiving, violence, employment, rural transportation, and social assistance. Ms. Warner was also a member of the Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI) in the Bras d'Or Lakes area.

All Council members were actively involved in their communities and diligently brought the concerns of women to the Council table. Council members were involved in the work of women's centres and other women's groups such as the Native Women's Association, as well as Interagencies on Family Violence, youth sexual health groups, and transition houses. Several of the Council members are also members of the Healthy Balance Program's Equity Reference Groups (ERG).

The Canadian Coalition of Advisory Councils met in Halifax in 2002-03, almost thirty years after the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. Status of Women officials from both provincial and federal jurisdictions discussed the current situation of women and how it had changed, and in some cases, not changed, from the time of the first Royal Commission. Of particular concern were issues related to: women in remote and Northern communities; women and children living in poverty; Aboriginal women and their place in decision-making; globalization and women's role in economic development and information technology; and the changing face of violence and ways in which victims and offenders are dealt with in the justice system. The Advisory Councils concluded that it was time to recommend a new Royal Commission on the Status of Women, given the significant societal changes that have happened in the last three decades.

**Priority: Participation and support of Minister in F/P/T forum and work**

Council's Executive Director and staff continued to provide support for and to participate in the F/P/T forum of Senior Status of Women Officials. With the particular focus on women's entry to occupations in high-growth areas of the econcomy, in 2002-03, the Advisory Council struck a working group involving representatives from Nova Scotia's Construction Sector Council, and the Skills Development & Training and Apprenticeship Divisions of the Department of Education. The goal of this working group is to increase the representation of women in the construction trades in Nova Scotia.

**Priority: Prepare and present briefs on major initiatives and legislative changes affecting women**

In February, 2003, Council presented remarks to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration on Immigrant Settlement Programs in Nova Scotia. The Council describes the extensive changes to immigration and increasing challenges faced by immigrants over the past 25 years and notes the particular challenges faced by immigrant women. Issues such as combining caregiving responsibilities with language learning timelines and the vulnerability and financial dependence associated with the status of "family class" immigrants or sponsored refugees are areas that should be targeted for change. The presentation document and Council recommendations can be found on the Council's website.

The Advisory Council participated in the Canadian delegation to the UN, to report on progress related to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Although the UN committee congratulated Canada on its many achievements in relation to women's rights, they expressed concerns about issues such as the continuing high rates of poverty among women in Canada, particularly among Aboriginal women.

In June of 2002, the Council submitted a brief on Women and Healthcare to the Royal Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada (Romanow Commission). Council made a number of recommendations to the Romanow Commission which stemmed from a population based and gendered approach to health. Women have particular concerns in relation to healthcare and health service delivery as they provide the bulk of unpaid caregiving to families and seniors as well as performing most of the paid caregiving work within the healthcare system. Until fairly recently, women's health issues were under-researched and poorly understood. Important determinants of health such as income must be examined in relation to gender as women and men can have very different lived experiences in relation to economic security, caregiving reponsibilities, and the experience of violence. The Council urged the Commission to maintain a strong, publicly funded healthcare system and to view healthcare as a long-term investment which will benefit both the health of individuals and comunities as well as the economy in general. The brief, including all recommendations can be found on the Council's website.

In October, 2002 Council submitted a brief in response to a Department of Justice Consultation

on whether to include voyeurism as an offence under the *Criminal Code* of Canada. Council took the position that offences related to voyeurism should be included under the *Criminal Code*. The occurrence of voyeurism is on the rise due, in part, to the increased use of new technologies for viewing, recording, and distributing pornographic material. Voyeurism goes largely unreported as many victims are unaware that they have been watched or recorded. Voyeurism is also of concern as it is estimated that 20% of perpetrators go on to commit sexual assault. Council's recommendation to include voyeurism in the *Criminal Code* is therefore in the interest of protecting unwitting victims and of preventing further criminal acts such as sexual assault.

Council continues to be involved in a number of justice issues that relate to or are affected by family or sexual violence. These include consultations on restorative justice as well as the issue of self-represented accused and the cross-examination of victims. How these kinds of issues affect women is of great concern to Council and will be examined in greater depth in the coming fiscal year. Council was involved in advising on the development of the *Domestic Violence Intervention Act* and follow-up consultations on its implementation.

**Priority: Inform public and policy audiences on issues related to women's economic security**

Council and staff work in partnership with numerous government departments and agencies, as well as a wide variety of non-governmental organizations that focus on the economic security of women. The Advisory Council established the Nova Scotia Round Table on Women's Economic Security in 2002 to enable both provincial and federal government and community-based representatives with an interest in women's economic security issues to share information and collaborate on initiatives. In 2002-03, the Round Table developed its terms of reference and priority issues and the Advisory Council agreed to commission a background paper on transition to employment programs for low income women.

In September, 2002, as part of Adult Learners' Week, the Advisory Council released Part 4 of its Statistical Series on women in Nova Scotia, *Learners and Teachers: Women's Education and Training*. The release was positively covered by the media and over 700 copies (PDF and print combined) were requested or downloaded from the Council website. The publication highlighted some very positive changes in women's educational attainment and outcomes over the past 25 years. Women in Nova Scotia are now more likely to be enrolled in university then men and women received the majority of both Bachelor's Degrees and Master's Degrees granted in Nova Scotia in 1998/99. Women now outnumber men in undergraduate science programs in the province and are close to equalling the number of men in medicine, law, and commerce. Despite these great gains, women are still very much under-represented in university engineering and applied science programs as well as in community college technology and trades programs. Women comprised only 5% of active apprentices in Nova Scotia in 2002.

Council provided advice to the Department of Health on changes to long-term care payments for seniors. Subsequent policy changes announced improved the previous situation and are a first step in aligning Nova Scotia with provinces outside Atlantic Canada.

**Priority: Continue the Healthy Balance Research Program**

The Healthy Balance Research Program has the Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the Atlantic Centre of Excellence on Women's Health as its lead partners, along with Dalhousie University and the IWK-Grace Health Centre. This 5-year program of research, now into its third year, was funded for $1.7 million by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research to investigate the health impacts of caregiving roles on women, in combination with paid work and empowerment in their lives. Over 25 researchers are associated with the program.

By the end of the 2002-03 fiscal year, the Healthy Balance Research Program had made considerable progress in its research agenda including:

- completed the focus group component of the research with 18 focus groups conducted, data transcribed, coded, and analyzed, and the final report being prepared
- completed the first phase of the secondary data analysis component using 1998 General Social Survey data. From this research, an article entitled ***Taking its Toll: Implications of Paid and Unpaid Work Responsibilities for Women's Well-Being*** by econcomists Lynn Lethbridge, Martha MacDonald, and Shelley Phipps has been presented at a number of conferences and will be published in an up-coming edition of the journal ***Atlantis***
- draft of the questionnaire for population-based survey component of the research has been completed and pilot-tested
- team members have been selected for the caregiving portraits component of the research and methodological issues related to this component have been sorted out
- Equity Reference Groups have played an active role in the development of the survey instrument and caregiving portraits
- scholarships have been provided to two Masters students in Family Studies and Gerontology at MSVU and one undergraduate student in this program has completed a practicum with Healthy Balance
- made presentation to parliamentarians as part of Breakfast on the Hill in December.

**Priority: Collaborate with government and non-governmental agencies on issues related to women's sexual and reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS concerns.**

Council staff continued to participate actively on the Nova Scotia Interdepartmental AIDS Liaison Committee and the Nova Scotia Round Table on Youth Sexual Health. Council prepared a backgrounder on Women and HIV/AIDS which will be released in the next fiscal year as well as conducting extensive analyses of results from a community consultation on youth sexual health services in the province. Results of these consultations will also be released in the coming fiscal year by the Round Table on Youth Sexual Health.

## Core Function: Information & Education

**Priority: Communications and Media Relations relating to the Council's 25th Anniversary events as well as to mark key dates and events for women throughout the year**

In September of 2002, as part of its 25th anniversary celebrations, the Advisory Council held a forum entitled, The Journey Continues. The forum brought together more than 60 women to recognize the progress and achievement of the past 25 years and to identify future directions for women in the province and for the Advisory Council. Reflecting on the past and thinking towards the future were equally important to the day. Therefore, both leaders and pioneers of Nova Scotia's women's movement (some of whom were part of the original Task Force on the Status of Women) and young women just beginning their careers and families were invited to participate. Using *World Café* techniques to faciliate collaborative thinking and dialogue, the forum was a powerful and memorable event for all who attended. A report, describing the forum and summarizing its outcomes is available on the Council website.

As part of its 25th anniversary celebrations, the Advisory Council also sponsored a writing contest for high-school girls. Entries were to be an article, story or poem on a theme that illustrated the student's vision of equality, fairness, and dignity and what needs to happen to attain this vision. Of the many entries received, Jessica LeBlanc's poem was chosen by a panel of independent judges for the first place prize, a $250 scholarship towards her post-secondary education.

The Advisory Council continued to mark important dates for women in 2002-03.

On December 6th, Council held an event in Province House to mark the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. The focus of the event was on the prevention of violence and four invited panelists gave their unique perspectives on the work of violence prevention currently underway in Nova Scotia. In other regions of the province Council staff organized candlelight vigils, film screenings and panel discussions on the issue of violence against women.

The Advisory Council's Anniversary celebrations culminated with a sold-out International Women's Day concert held at Pier 21on March 8th. The concert, hosted by CBC's Olga Milosevich, was anchored by the Aoelian Singers and featured Nova Scotia musicians, artists, and writers including Susan Crowe, the Blue Engine String Quartet, Tiyaila Cain-Grant, Holly Hartlen, Cathy Porter, Sheree Fitch and the Beechville Baptist Youth Fellowship Dancers. The sold-out event was attended by Her Excellency, Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada and Right Honourable Madam Chief Justice Beverly McLachlin, among others. Proceeds of the concert - in excess of $10,500 - were donated by the Aoelian Singers to Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan. In other regions of the province Council staff celebrated International Women's Day by partnering with a variety of community groups to host celebrations in Amherst and Middleton.

August, 2002 saw the culmination of the Amherst Women's Mural Project. The Women's Mural

designed and painted by artist, Susan Tooke, showcases the valuable contributions women have made to the Cumberland County area over the years. The Mural depicts a grandmother with a photograph album in her lap, surrounded by children. The photographs shown depict how, in many ways, women have contributed to the community over the years.

In order to mark African Heritage Month, a Heritage Tea was held for African Nova Scotian women from the Amherst area in February, 2003. Twenty-five women attended the tea during which they shared many stories of the challenges and achievements they experienced throughout their lives. As a follow-up to the Heritage Tea, a 30-minute video will be produced in partnership with Eastlink and the Cumberland African Nova Scotia Association. The video will chronicle the oral histories of Black women from Cumberland County.

A Women's History Month event was held in Digby with over 50 local women attending in honour of Nola Jeffrey, a woman who had contributed life-long work to her community.

There were a total of 46 print media stories about Council's work published in 2002-03. Stories covered a variety of topics which included women's history, the Council's women in politics workshops, transition house funding cuts, women and healthcare, and the Council's statistical publication on women and education.

**Priority: Support Minister's on-going informational needs. Support research and community liaison functions through adequate informational support. Provide information and referral services to some 2000 inquiries per annum. Maintain and enhance web-site, responding to identified information needs.**

The Council's website continues to increase in popularity and has become an increasingly valuable and cost-effective communications tool. In 2002-03, Council website usage hit an all-time high with over 68,000 pageviews, which is close to 40% higher than in the previous fiscal year. The number of Council publications downloaded from the Council website also increased substantially over the past year. Close to 22,000 Council publications were downloaded from the website in 2002-03, representing a 156% increase over the previous fiscal year.

2002-03 marks the first year in which the Advisory Council offered its bi-weekly electronic news bulletin, *NewsBytes*, as a replacement for its quarterly print newlsletter. *NewsBytes* has become a valuable tool for informing the Council's stakeholders of events and information that is of interest to the women's community. Although the number of people receiving *NewsBytes* (302 by the end of the fiscal year), does not yet equal the Council's print newsletter circulation figures, there has been a slow but steady increase in the number of subscribers and, to date, no one has unsubscribed from the service.

Because of the increasing prevalence of common-law relationships and because many people are unaware of the legal rights and obligations associated with common-law relationships, the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, in partnership with the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Senior Citizens Secretariat, began to produce a guide for women in common-law relationships. The guide will be available in February, 2004.

As has been the case in past years, Advisory Council staff produced an up-to-date fact sheet on woman abuse in preparation for the National Day of Remembrance. Council's most popular publication, *Making Changes: A Book for Women in Abusive Relationships*, 3rd Edition, continued to be well-used by the public. In 2002-03, over 7,000 copies (English and French combined) were downloaded from the Council's website and an additional 4,300 print copies were requested. Council will release a revised 3rd edition of this publication in December of 2003.

## Core Function: Community Liaison & Rural Outreach

**Priority: Continue workshops to promote women's leadership and participation in public affairs**

In recent years, the Advisory Council has focused its efforts to increase Nova Scotian women's participation in public affairs. A series of workshops designed to attract more women to political life was offered by Council over the course of the 2002-03 fiscal year. In total, 62 women participated in workshops held in four regions of the province (Amherst, Port Hawkesbury, Sydney, and New Glasgow[1]). The workshops were very successful and participants rated them highly. The vast majority of participants rated the three components of the workshop (Presentation on government Agencies, Boards, and Commissions, Research Presentation, and Panel Presentation) as either useful or very useful. 99% of participants indicated they would recommend the workshop to others and close to 95% of participants said they would be interested in attending additional and more in-depth workshops on women and politics. For this reason, the Advisory Council will be planning and developing materials for a campaign "school" in the coming years. Towards this end, Council has updated the popular publication *Votes for Women: A Political GuideBook for Nova Scotia Women* for release in the 2003-04 fiscal year.

**Priority: Work with organizations such as Women's CED Network, women's business groups, Techsploration, Hypatia, and L'Association des Acadiennesde la Nouvelle-Écosse to foster economic equality and life-long learning in all occupational areas, particularly in fields where women remain under-represented.**

In order to continue addressing the issue of the under-representation of women in trades and technology, the Advisory Council maintanined strong links with groups such as Hypatia and Techsploration in 2002-03. These groups have a shared interest in promoting women's equal participation in sectors of the labour force where women remain seriously under-represented. The goal of Techsploration is to increase the number of young women working in the trades, technical and technology-related occupations. This year, Techsploration was offered in 8 Nova Scotian schools and 49 female grade nine students participated. Plans are underway to expand Techsploration, province-wide within the next few years. The Advisory Council continues to provide advice and support to the Steering Committee as well as the Program Expansion

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[1] The first in this workshop series, offered in Yarmouth,was actually held at the end of the 2001-02 fiscal year and reported upon in last year's accountability report.

Committee of this valuable program. The Advisory Council was also actively involved in a regional Innovation Summit organized by Industry Canada and contributes to the Nova Scotia Skills Agenda through involvement in the Labour Force Planning Committee.

The Advisory Council provided assistance and advice to Hypatia and the Women's CED Network in their successful funding proposal to Status of Women Canada to examine policies related to rural women and the new economy.

Council made a number of significant contributions related to social and econcomic inclusion in 2002-03. Social inclusion - the need to involve groups that have been without a voice in government and society - has been a focus of a number of federal and provincial intiatives in recent years. Through participation in the Social Inclusion Reference Group of the Population and Public Health Branch of of Health Canada, the Advisory Council contributed content advice to the publication, ***An Inclusion Lens: Workbook for Looking at Social and Economic Exclusion and Inclusion***. Council staff also provided advice to the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services (Special Initiatives) in the development of a stakeholder consultation on social inclusion.

**Priority: Participate on the Coordinating Committee and Field Teams of the Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI).**

The Advisory Council continued to foster the inclusion of women in the federal-provincial Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI) through staff and Council involvement in the coordinating committee and the Bras d'Or Lakes and Fundy/Annapolis field teams. The SCI is an intergovernmental effort to develop more collaborative relations across all levels of government and between governments and communities to promote better communication and coordinated action on issues affecting the sustainability of rural communities. Staff have successfully encouraged the participation of women in field team engagement activities and have ensured that the inclusion of women and women's issues have been brought forward in field team and coordinating committee planning processes. The SCI business plan for 2003-04 includes a process to ensure that the social and cultural pillars of sustainable development, including issues related to gender and social inclusion, are fully integrated into the work of the SCI.

Council staff helped Nova Scotia Women's FishNet to publicize and market FishNet's ***Good Policy, Good Health*** kit. Staff also partnered with FishNet on a successful $25,000 funding application to the IWK Foundation for a follow-up project. The follow-up will develop a ***Good Policy, Good Health*** facilitation guide and will conduct workshops to implement ***Good Policy, Good Health*** in three coastal communities.

Council staff supported the development of a community-based committee to organize a workshop to assist health-care service providers and those affected by Foetal Alcohol Spectrum

Disorder (FAS-D) to identify issues and gaps in service and to make links with a nation-wide project based in British Columbia.

## Financial Results

| Actual to Authority Variance Report | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Budget Subject** | **Authority** | **Actual** | **Percentage of Authority** |
| Policy, Research & Information Svcs. | $515,900.00 | $482,930.27 | 93.61% |
| Community Liaison & Rural Outreach | $130,100.00 | $135,844.42 | 104.42% |
| **Total** | **$646,000.00** | **$618,774.69** | **95.79%** |
| **Salaries and Benefits** | **$473,800.00** | **$462,676.00** | **97.65%** |
| **Full Time Equivalents** | **7.8** | **7.8** | **7.8** |

The expenditures of the agency were well within the spending limits set, and are consistent with government's overall direction to restrain expenditures.

# Outcome Measures 2002-03
# Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

## Council Members' Self-Rating of Participation in Community

One of the Advisory Council's three core business areas is policy and research. A desired outcome within this area is the sustained effectiveness of the Advisory Council which is achieved by supporting members' active engagement in their communities to enable them to bring forward the concerns of women to relevant policy audiences.

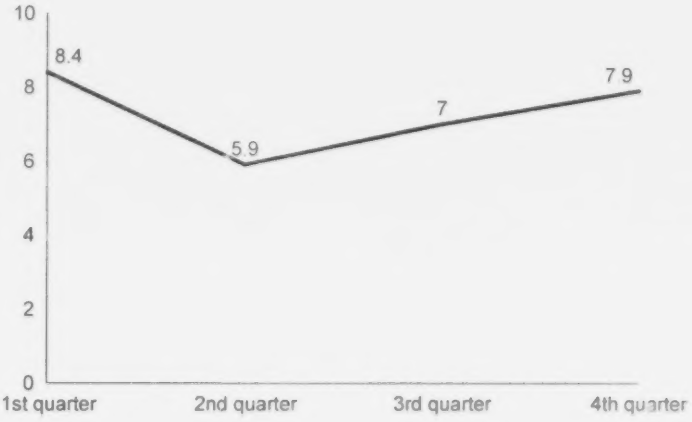
**What does the measure tell us?**

The Council members' self-rating of participation in the community is a quarterly administered self-rating which ranges from 1 (was not able to do any Council-related work) to 10 (did Council-related work at least once a week). Scores are averaged across all Council members for each quarter of the fiscal year. Higher scores are indicative of a more active, vibrant Council with members who are dedicating a significant amount of personal time to the concerns of women in the province and who know the needs of the women they are serving.

**Where are we now?**

Four new members joined the Advisory Council at the end of June, 2002. Council members who were present during the first quarter of the fiscal year were very experienced and comfortable with their roles and subsequently had particularly high self-ratings for that quarter (on average, 8.4 out of 10). As might be expected, with the addition of new Council members in the second quarter, average self-ratings lowered somewhat to an average of 5.9 but increased to 7.9 by the end of the fiscal year as new members gained experience, knowledge, and ease with their roles.

**Average Advisory Council Member Self-Ratings, 2002-03**




Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

**Figure 1.**

**Where do we want to go/be in the future?**

Average Council member self-ratings met or surpassed our target for 2004-05 in three out of four quarters for the 2002-03 fiscal year. Although there is likely to be some fluctauation as new members are introduced to Council (as was seen in the second quarter of 2002-03), it is expected that we will continue to meet or exceed our target of 7 out of 10 for the coming fiscal years.

## Council Website Visits

Information and education is another of the Advisory Council's three core business areas. A desired outcome within this area is the public's awareness of Council initiatives.

**What does the measure tell us?**

Tracking the Council's website utilization gives us an idea of the popularity of the Council's work, including its briefs, statistical publications and other informational documents, which the Council is increasingly making available to the public in electronic format. Consistently high Council website usage indicates a consistently strong public interest in and demand for the Council's work.

**Where are we now?**

**Advisory Council Web-Site Usage (pageviews)**
**2001-02 and 2002-03**

Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

**Figure 2.**

In 2002-03, the Advisory Council's website had 68,260 visits, an increase of 39% over the 2001-02 fiscal year. Though some fluctuation was evident in the monthly number of website visits, the overall fiscal year showed an upward trend. For example, the average monthly number of website visits for the first half of the fiscal year was 4,738 and for the last half was 6,639.

**Where do we want to go/be in the future?**

Our target for this measure was to exceed 50,000 website visits by 2004-05. As we have already surpassed this target in the 2003-04 fiscal year, we have revised our target for 2004-05 to 70,000 website visits. We do not anticipate having any difficulty attaining this goal.

## Information and Referral Requests

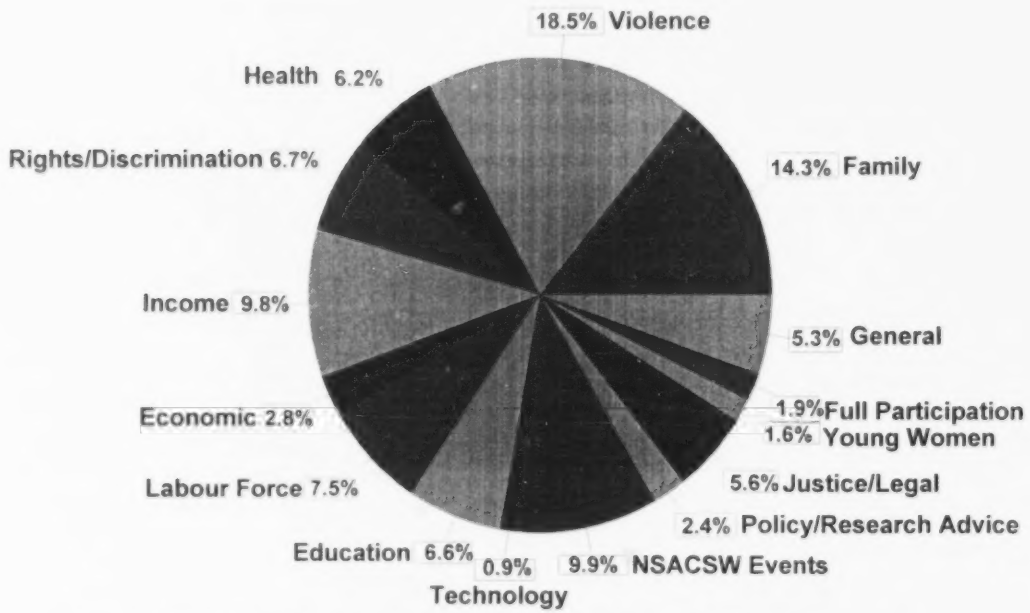
Another desired outcome within the core business area of information and education is the public's awareness of Council's services.

**What does the measure tell us?**

Tracking and analysis of the information and referral requests made to Council staff by the public gives us a sense of the public's level of awareness of the information and referral services that the Advisory Council provides. Because staff keep track of the topic areas of these requests, we can also get a sense of the types and variety of issues that are of concern to the women we serve. The statistics collected also allow us to determine who is making the most use of Advisory Council services, what types of requests people are making, the types of actions taken by staff to address the requests and staff satisfaction with the action provided.

**Where are we now?**

**Subject Area of Requests made to Advisory Council, 2002-03**




Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

**Figure 3.**

In 2003-03, 1,205 persons made a total of 1,424 requests for information to Advisory Council

staff. The requests made resulted in 1,747 actions taken by staff. The subject area of requests was varied but requests related to violence, family, health, and rights/discrimination accounted for half (50.8%) of all requests (see Figure 3. above). Staff were **satisfied** with the actions they took in response to public requests 88.9% of the time, **somewhat satisfied** 9.5% of the time, and **not satisfied** only 1.6% of the time.

**Where do we want to go/be in the future?**

Our 2004-05 target for this measure was 2000 requests for information and referral from the public. For the past two years, the number of requests for information and referral have been lower than in the past. The decline in the number of requests may have been influenced by the closure of two of the Advisory Council's field offices in recent years as well as the public's increasing reliance on the Internet and the Council's website to obtain information.

## Media Coverage of Council's Work

Another desired outcome within the core business area of information and education is the print media's coverage of Council initiatives, events, and work in general.

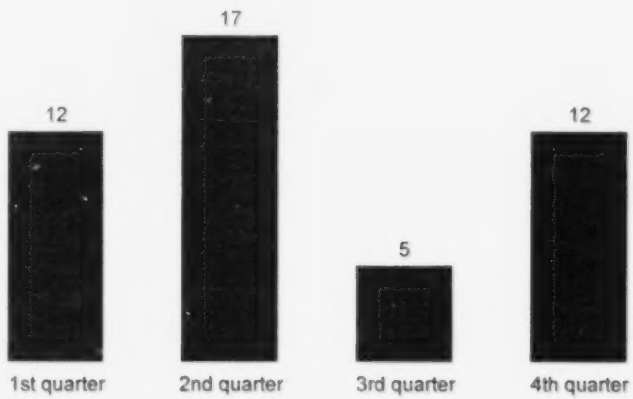
**What does the measure tell us?**

Tracking the print media's coverage of the Council's work provides us with a sense of the Council's public image. A consistently strong interest in the Council's work on the part of the media is consistent with a stronger public image and increased public recognition of the Council's work and initiatives.

**Where are we now?**

**Print Media Coverage of Council's Work**
**2002-03**

In 2002-03 there were a total of 46 print media stories published that related to the work of the Advisory Council. Although there was substantial month-to-month variation in the number of media stories published (ranging from no stories in June, November, and December to 10 stories in April). There was an average of close to 4 print media stories per month.




Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

**Figure 4.**

**Where do we want to go/be in the future?**

Our target for this measure for 2004-05 is a minimum of one print story per month. We do not anticipate having any difficulty meeting this target.

## Use of Advisory Council Publications

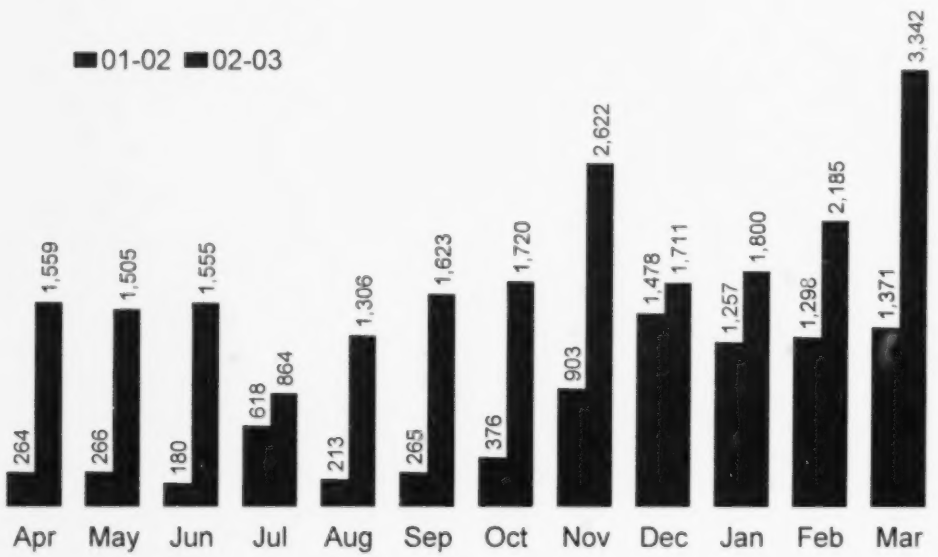
Another desired outcome within the core business area of information and education is the public's support for and level of usage of the Council's work.

**What does the measure tell us?**

Tracking the public's use of Council publications, both printed copy and electronic format, gives us an idea of the popularity of the Council's published work, including its briefs, statistical publications and other informational documents. Consistently high demand for Council publications indicates the public's interest in and satisfaction with the published work of the Council, analogous to the media's use of circulation figures. Tracking the distribution by publication allows us to know how popular particular publications are.

**Where are we now?**

**Advisory Council Publications (PDF files)**
**Downloaded from Web-Site, 2001-02 and 2002-03**




Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

**Figure 5.**

As can be seen in Figure 5, the number of publications downloaded from the Advisory Council's website continues to increase. In total, 21,792 publications (PDF files) were downloaded from the Council's website in 2002-03. This represents a 156% increase over the number of downloads in 2001-02. Additionally, another 4,500 hard copies of publications were distributed to meet the requests of the public.

By far, the Council's most popular publication was *Making Changes: A Book for Women in Abusive Relationships* (3rd edition), with 7,130 PDF copies downloaded and another 4,300 paper copies distributed in 2002-03.

Consistently high demand was also evident for the Council's statistical publications *(Money Matters, Family Matters, Family Violence & Personal Safety*, and *Learners & Teachers*) with over 3,600 PDF copies downloaded in 2002-03.

The importance of the Council's website in improving the public's access to council information can hardly be over-stated. The number of research and statistical publications downloaded, for instance, exceeds the number the Council could typically afford to make available in hard copy. Thus our information and outreach capacity is enhanced in a highly cost-effective manner.

**Where do we want to go/be in the future?**

Our target for this measure for 2002-03 was 5,000 or more requests for publications. Given that the Advisory Council had more than five times this many publications downloaded/requested in 2002-03, targets for 2004-05 should be changed to 25,000 requests for/downloads of Council publications.

## Women's Political Participation Workshop
## Enrolment and Effectiveness

Community Liaison and Rural Outreach is another of the Advisory Council's three core business areas. A desired outcome within this area is the increased participation of women in public affairs.

**What does the measure tell us?**

A series of workshops designed to attract more women to political life was offered by council over the course of the 2002-03 fiscal year. The level of demand and interest in the workshop was assessed by the number of women enroled. The effectiveness of the workshop was measured in a number of ways. Participants completed a workshop evaluation form where they were asked to rate the utility of the various workshop components. Participants were also asked to indicate their **current** level of political participation and, upon completion of the workshop, were asked to predict their **future** level of political participation in four political domains (community, municipal, provincial, and federal).

**Where are we now?**

In total, 62 women participated in 4 workshops held in four different regions of the province (Amherst, Port Hawkesbury, Sydney, and New Glasgow) in 2002-03. Workshop participants were asked to rate the utility of the workshop on several dimensions. In each case, participants used a 5-point scale where 1 = not at all useful, 3 = somewhat useful, and 5 = very useful.

63.6% of participants rated the presentation on Agencies, Boards, and Commissions as very useful (5 out of 5) while another 25.5% rated it as useful (4 out of 5). Only 10.9% of participants found this component of the workshop to be somewhat useful (3 out of 5) and no participants gave a rating under 3. The average rating for this workshop dimension was 4.53 out of 5.

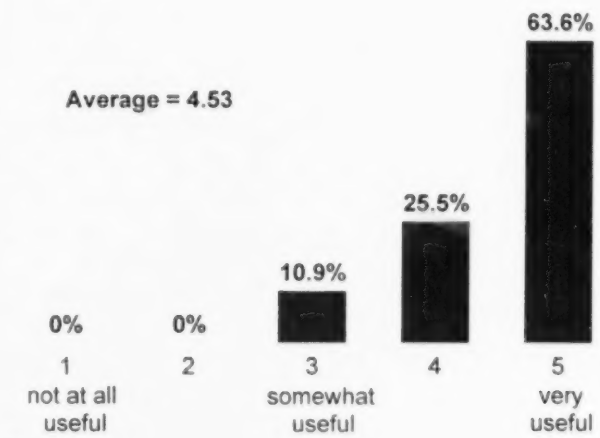



**Figure 6.**

**Usefulness of Panel Presentation**

The majority of participants (67.9%) rated the panel presentation as very useful while another 23.2% rated it as useful. Only 7.1% of participants rated this component of the workshop as somewhat useful and only one participant indicated a rating less than 3. The average rating for this workshop dimension was 4.57 out of 5.

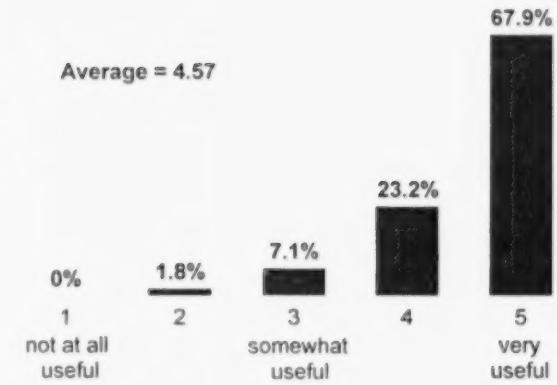



**Figure 7.**

**Usefulness of Research Presentation**

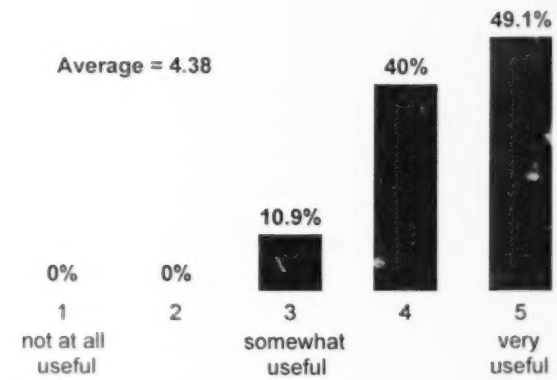



**Figure 8.**

49.1% of participants rated the research presentation as very useful, 40% rated is as useful, and another 10.9% rated it as somewhat useful. No participants indicated a rating less than 3. The average rating for this workshop dimension was 4.38 out of 5.

**Recommend Workshop to Other Women?**

Workshop participants were also asked whether they would recomend the workshop to other women. The vast majority of participants (84.2%) indicated that they would definitely recommend the workshop while another 14% said they would likely recommend it. The average rating for this item was 4.82 out of 5.

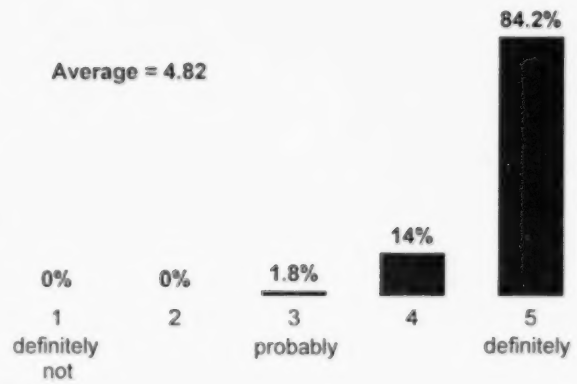



**Figure 9.**

The final workshop evaluation item asked participants whether they would be interested in attending other workshops on women's political participation. The majority of workshop participants (80.7%) indicated that they would definitely be interested in future workshops. Another 14% said they would likely be interested and 5.3% said they would probably be interested in other workshops. The average rating for this item was 4.75 out of 5.

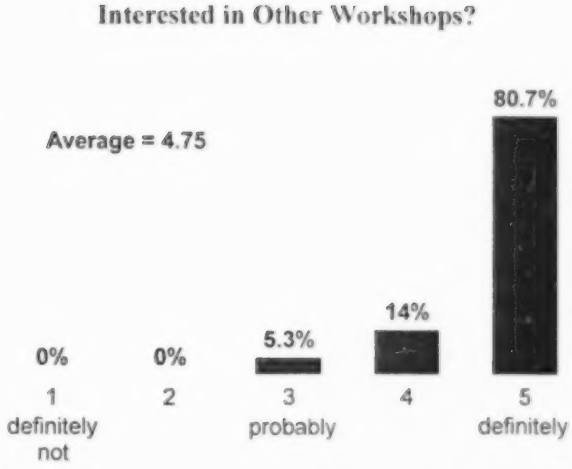



**Figure 10.**

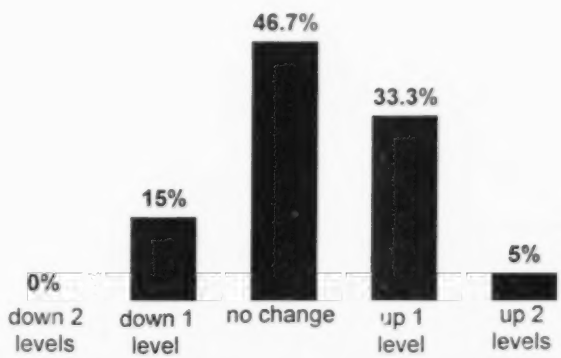
At the beginning of the workshop, participants were asked to indicate their **current** level of participation in four domains of political life: community, municipal, provincial, and federal. For each domain, participants rated their level of involvement according to the following scale:

- leader
- active involvement
- occasional involvement
- no involvement

At the end of the workshop, participants used the same scale as above to rate their expected **future** level of political participation. Difference scores were calculated by subtracting the current participation level from the expected future participation level for each political domain. Results from the four workshops conducted in 2002-03 indicated the following:

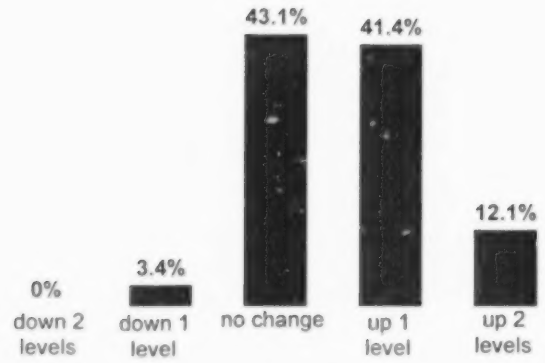
## Community Politics

33.3% of participants indicated that their participation in **community-level** politics would increase by one level in the future and another 5% indicated their participation would increase by two levels.




Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

**Figure 11.**




Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

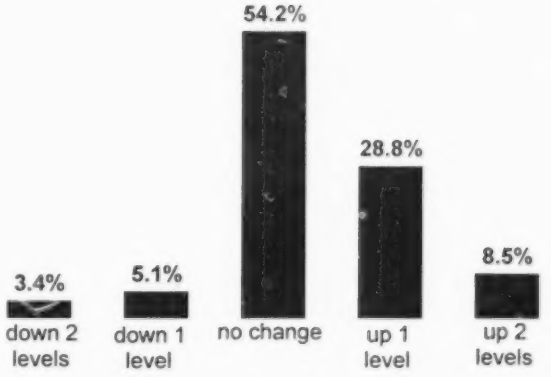
**Figure 12.**

## Municipal Politics

41.4% of participants indicated that their participation in municipal-level politics would increase by one level and another 12.1% indicated their participation would increase by two levels.

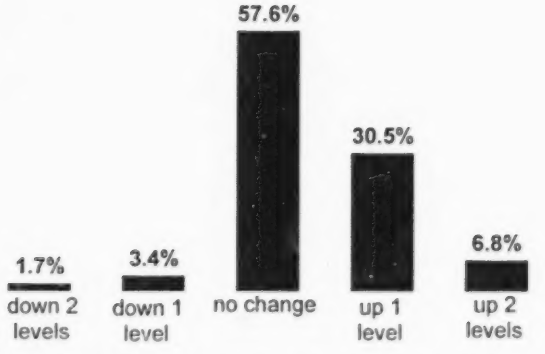
## Provincial Politics

28.2% of participants indicated that their participation in provincial-level politics would increase by one level and another 8.5% indicated their participation would increase by two levels.




Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

**Figure 13.**




Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

**Figure 14.**

## Federal Politics

30.5% of participants indicated that their participation in federal-level politics would increase by one level and another 6.8% indicated their participation would increase by two levels.

**Where do we want to go/be in the future?**

Given the highly positive response of the participants in this series of political workshops for women, it is not anticipated that we will have any difficulty attaining our target of 25% of women indicating plans to participate in public affairs for 2004-05.

## Supplemental Information and Appendices

### Appendix A - Council Members

Biographical informaion is current for the reporting period.

### Cape Breton Region

**Patricia LeBlanc** is a resident of Sydney with extensive community involvement. As a woman with disabilities, she has been active in promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities. Ms. LeBlanc has served on the board of Community Involvement of the Disabled holding various executive positions on the board over the years. She has also served on the board of the Nova Scotia League for Equal Opportunities. She initiated the start-up of the ACE Bowling League, the first bowling league for persons with cross-disabilities. Ms. LeBlanc represented post-secondary Nova Scotian students with disabilities on the board of directors of the National Education Association of Disabled Students from 1990-1994 and also served a two-year term on the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women from 1996-1998 (Patricia Flynn). Over the years she has worked as a bookkeeper, researcher, office supervisor and as an enforcement officer/case aide. Ms. LeBlanc is working on a Bachelor of Business Administration from the University College of Cape Breton.

**Rita Warner (Chair)** is a resident of Cape Breton with extensive career experience and community involvement. For the last 25 years she has held a variety of positions with such organizations as Inverness County Recreation & Tourism, Statistics Canada, MacDonald Hall in Inverness, and the Women Aware Women's Centre in Port Hawkesbury. Ms. Warner is skilled in program design and administration; project/group facilitation; and promotions. She has been an active volunteer for a myriad of community organizations including Women Aware, the Women's Reference Group to the Labour Force Development Board, Violence Against Women, Inverness County Literacy Board, the Purple Ribbon Campaign and the Nova Scotia Tourism Association.

## Valley/Fundy Region

**Candy J. Palmater** is currently a resident of Centre Rawdon and was born and raised in northern New Brunswick. Her father is a member of the Eel River Bar band, but Candy grew up off reserve. Candy was called to the Nova Scotia Bar in 1999 and has practiced both Aboriginal and labour law. Upon graduating from Dalhousie Law School, Candy became the first Aboriginal valedictorian of a law school in Canada. She also received the Eunice W. Beeson memorial prize, awarded to a female in the graduating class who is outstanding in the areas of academic excellence, contribution to student life, and character. Candy is active on many boards and organizations including Big Brothers Big Sisters, Junior Achievement - Economics of Staying in School program, the Indigenous Bar Association, and the National Association of Women and the Law, to name a few. She is also Vice-chair of the Canadian Bar Association's Aboriginal Section and chair of the Continuing Legal Information Society's Communications committee. Before attending law school, Candy had a successful career in Human Resources at Dalhousie University. Candy has been providing training in Aboriginal issues for more than a decade. She has provided training to Provincial and Military police, as well as RCMP. She has lectured extensively throughout Canada on Aboriginal legal, education and employment equity issues. Candy has also volunteered her time speaking with students of all ages about her culture and education.

**Sonja Power** is a resident of Amherst and is a Correctional Officer with Springhill Institution in the Maximum Security Women's Unit. Currently, she is the President/Chair of the Board for the Amherst Association of Healthy Adolescent Sexuality and is an active member of the Springhill Institution's Women's Committee. Ms. Power has extensive volunteer experience in the corrections, victim support and healthy living areas. Ms. Power has held a number of term positions over the years as a counsellor, outreach coordinator, wellness coordinator and project assistant with organizations of particular interest to women.

## Highland Region

**Doreen Paris** of New Glasgow was employed with the Extension Department of St. Francis Xavier University. She is active in the Pictou County Women's Centre, and past president of Tearmann Society for Battered Women. She was provincial president of the African United Baptist Association Women's Institute, and received certification as a Black legal advocate. In August, 2002, Doreen became moderator of the African United Baptist Association(AUBA), the third woman to hold this office in AUBA's 150-year history. Doreen's contributions to her community have been recognized by the New Glasgow Volunteer of the Year Award and the YWCA Women of Distinction Award. Ms. Paris also represented the Highland Region from 1994-1998.

**Mary Elizabeth (Liz) Chisholm** grew up in Antigonish and graduated with a B.A. and B.Ed. from St. Francis Xavier University. She also has a diploma in Special Education from Acadia University and has taught at Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School in Antigonish for the past 20 years. Liz is very involved in her community, her church, and in political life, having run as a candidate in two provincial elections. She is the proud mother of 5 daughters and is grandmother to 7 granddaughters.

## Central Region

**Linda Carvery**, of Halifax, is an accomplished performer/singer and entrepreneur with interests in the community, economic and social development. She is Executive Director of the African Nova Scotian Training Centre. Ms. Carvery has spent many years working in the community, particularly with persons with disabilities and families in crisis. She received an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from Mount Saint Vincent University in 1998.

**Mary Hamblin** is currently the Director of the MBA Program at Dalhousie University. Prior to this she has held a number of positions including Ombudsperson - Dalhousie University, Executive Director of Planned Parenthood Nova Scotia, and Communications Teacher, Nova Scotia Community College - Bridgewater Campus. She is also a writer and business strategy consultant. Ms. Hamblin has a long time interest in women's issues having served on a number of associations and boards, including the Women's Health Education Network Board.

**Nancy Leaman** started her first business in Liverpool, NS at the age of seventeen. She is a licensed cosmetologist and she has been active in community based, business and social organizations. Winds of Change Society is one of her favorites: in 1996, she enjoyed the challenge of playing the male role of Che in world-renowned Evita. Nancy is a creative person at heart but has continued to pursue her education and career in business. She has taught bookkeeping for small business and has helped people with business computer systems, as well as their dreams of becoming an entrepreneur. She has served on the Board of Directors for South Shore Opportunities Agency, South Queens Chamber of Commerce and Winds of Change. She has also served as the Chairperson for the Seaside School Trustees and as a Member of School Advisory Council for the Dr. J. C. Wickwire Academy. She has recently become a single parent and resides with her two sons Solomon and Schuyler.

## Appendix B
## Council Publications 2002-03

Council's Plan of Action (Business Plan) for 2002-2003 (April, 2002)

Women and Healthcare: A Brief to the Royal Commission on the Future of Healthcare in Canada (June, 2002)

Annual Report for 2000-2001 (September, 2002)

Learners and Teachers: Women's Education and Training. Part 4 of Women in Nova Scotia: A Statistical Series (September, 2002)

Presentation to the Nova Scotia Utilities Review Board on Automobile Insurance (September, 2002)

Voyeurism as a Criminal Offence: Response to Department of Justice Consultation Paper (October, 2002)

Backgrounder on Women's Issues (November, 2002)

Revised Fact Sheet on Woman Abuse, 2002 (December, 2002)

Accountability Report for 2001-2002 (December, 2002)

The Journey Continues: An Account of the 25th Anniversary Forum of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women (January, 2003)

Presentation to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration (February, 2003)